42: Vanoverbergh I-5 (no date) 1936-1938 OA1 Philippines
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In general, it is said of a person who dies without anybody being aware of it (*maáñaw*), whether by drowning or otherwise, that some part of his body will invariably appear in his house, and that the said part will tell the relatives the name of the deceased and the news of his death. 763

Death by cursing is also to be classified under the same heading. Indeed the Isneg never call it by the term *merúnud*, and the kidneys of a person who dies on that account, are supposed to have been devoured as usual. Consequently it seems that, according to the Isneg viewpoint, the curse is not so much the immediate cause of death as a kind of summons to the spirits, by which they are invited to proceed to the stealing of a person's kidneys. To curse (*pakkawán;* past tense: *piúkawán;* from the stem *pakkáw*, "shouting") is done shouting, and in such a way as to cause the adversary to hear the curse pronounced against him. The result is instantaneous; the cursed person gradually becomes thinner and thinner, and finally dies. Nevertheless not all curses are intended to entail the death of a person. It may happen, for instance, if you are a thief, that people will pray that some part of your body become diseased or destroyed; in this case you will be *malbág*, and the person who cursed you is said to *manaddl* (to destroy, to deteriorate). 761 754

To resume: the Isneg consider all deaths from disease (including suicide and death by cursing) to be caused by a kidney-eating spirit, while deaths by accident or by violence are considered as natural, there being at the same time a kind of connection between death and the object or person that took part in it, either because this object or person constitutes a kind of mediate (the coconut tree from which a person falls) or immediate cause (the authorities who execute a culprit, a headhunter who kills an enemy), or because it is the final cause, *causa finalis* (God, in the case of a martyr; one's country, in the case of a patriot). All deaths by accident or by violence, except felonious homicide, come under the denomination *merúnud*. 761 753 [682]

B. BURIAL AND MOURNING

1. Death till Burial

Let us now enter the house of a dying Isneg. The poor man is very sick, it has even been rumored about that he is actually very near death, that he can hardly articulate a sound (*mañgassát*). The *dorarákit* or shamaness has used all means in her power to avert the 763 755

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Some tobacco, or some of the ingredients used in the chewing of betel nut (betel nut, leaves of the betel pepper, and lime), according to the former habits of the deceased. 764

To these may be added:

A bottle of *bási;*
One or more spears;
One or more shields;
Some coins;
Some favorite musical instrument of the deceased; etc.

One of the following objects is also usually present, and, in the case of a rich man, all of them:

A *saxabán* (string of beads worn around the head);
A string of beads (worn around the neck);
A *xúsi* jar containing some *bási* (in which case there is no bottle of *bási*).

Everything is placed inside the coffin, the *xúsi* excepted, which is buried in the hole especially dug for it. 764

These objects, even though some of them are very precious in the eyes of the Isneg, are never interfered with; they always remain where they are. The desecration of a grave by robbers or other malefactors is something unknown in Apayaw. 764 769 685

Sometimes it happens that an ill-intentioned person (never one of the relatives), probably moved by a desire for revenge, when unobserved, stealthily places some herbs in the coffin, alongside the body. He does this with the purpose of forcing the body to leave its abode at night in the shape of a *balańóbáń*, and to roam around playing havoc among the chickens of the neighbors. 764 754 775

Before the body is placed in the grave, the bottom of the latter is strewn with ashes, obtained by burning an *anańá*, which is a kind of raincoat made of palm leaves. This ceremony is supposed to serve a double purpose: the raincoat will render good service to the deceased in the other world, and the ashes will prevent the dead body, either from leaving its grave in the shape of a *balańóbáń* or ghost, or at least from frightening the neighbors.

Lest the *balańóbáń* scare the relatives of the deceased or the women of the neighborhood who daily repair to their work, the Isneg usually put some *takkág* vines inside the coffin, alongside the body. The *takkág* is a schizaeaceous fern (Lygodium sp.), which differs from 764 824

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Should they come along anyhow, either through negligence on your part, or because you have been taken unawares, as soon as they start alighting in your field, take a *balandán*-blanket,[36] thrust one of its corners in the end of a long pole, which you have split for the purpose, and erect this improvised flag somewhere in your *kómān*. The higher the pole the easier it will be to frighten the locusts away. If there is no pole at hand, tie the blanket to the top of one of the trees that have been left standing, provided it be a tall one. This stratagem is called *magdattág*.

Once the locusts have taken possession of your rice field, the only way to drive them off is to throw *aksumég* (Bayag pronunciation) among them: this is a low herb with small hairy leaves that grows all over the district.

Here in Apayaw the Isneg do not live close enough together to be able to imitate the inhabitants of other parts of the Mountain Province, where large groups of people, equipped with small nets, go to attack the enemy. But, after all, these expeditions are rarely very effective, and usually the only result, perhaps the most important in the eyes of the improvident natives, is the catching of a large amount of viands without any cost and with comparatively little trouble. The Isneg also considers a locust as a dainty and may for a few days look with dry eyes on the disaster that has been wrought in his beloved *kómān*, only to expiate later on by a prolonged fast the few happy hours of satiated gourmandizing

But let us revert to our rice fields, and see how the Isneg tackles the problem of defending them against the jealousy of his neighbors, who either use natural means to destroy the paddy, which they rarely dare to attempt, or resort to occult powers to play havoc in a *kómān*, which is of much more frequent occurrence.

If you mix the barks of the *pannó*, a forest tree, and of the *karráń*, a leafless plant, some twelve inches tall, growing in forests (the name means "scaring away"), and place this mixture in your field, the person who ventures to harm your crops, will die instantly and without any previous illness, as soon as he gets home.

If, instead of the barks, you use *annoná*, a low herb growing in forests, the villain will be killed in an accident.

Now it may happen that you think about it only after some harm has been done already. In such a case insert a *binusírān*, a kind of

[36] Indigo, ornamented with purple thread at the seams.

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243 754 *mandíń* bead,[37] in the soil of your *kómān*, and very soon the culprit's eyes will become swollen, so that he cannot hide his guilt any longer.

If you happen to know that your enemy is the owner of the field 243 789 next to yours, the best way to take your revenge is to place *da-líg-* herbs in the patch of uncleared ground that separates both your fields: after that his crops will be tampered with instead of yours.

These are the plants which are the most frequently placed in a neighbor's *kómān* with the purpose of injuring the rice crop:

The *agdadál*, a climbing plant, that grows in thickets of bamboo grass, and bears white flowers resembling those of the *pulút* (a middle-sized forest tree) and brown fruits: it renders a rice field absolutely valueless. The name itself is indicative of the effect it produces: "destroying".

The *taxa-siyát*, a creeping herb, found on level ground: placed in a neighbor's field without his knowledge, it allures noxious animals to come and ravage the crop.

The *anappudappúg*, a low herb, found in abandoned gardens: it causes the rice to *magdappúg*, "stop growing and die".

The *dalańíáāń*, a low herb with yellowish leaves, growing almost anywhere: it causes the young paddy to grow yellow and wither.

The *assáp* or *kassáp*, another low herb with the same habitat as the preceding: it causes the death of the palay in the whole field.

Here is a rather innocent means to get the better of one's competitors: the *battoál*, a little herb that grows in forested areas and bears white flowers, when placed in a *kómān*, causes the latter to yield a better harvest than a contiguous field. This amulet is obviously of no value to isolated *kómān*.

3. WEEDING AND SUBSEQUENT CARE OF THE RICE FIELD

243 In the months of July and August we have the *agbablát*, which means "the time of the *ballát*, the time of weeding". At this time of the year the young palay is cleaned thoroughly, lest it be choked by useless weeds (*kaddát*). Plants that start sprouting only after the *ballát* has been finished will never be able to catch up with the growth of the paddy, and so will do it no harm.

With the *umá* (clearing), followed by the *si-dúg* (burning), and the *tooto* (planting), this is the most important work that precedes the

[37] The *mandíń*, which is a very precious kind of bead, at least in the eyes of the Isneg, has the shape of a small cylinder consisting of two almost equal parts, one of them more or less blackish, and the other of a much lighter color.